

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s): Klaus Spies, et al. **Examiner:** N/A
Serial No.: 09/280,874 **Art Unit:** N/A
Filed: March 29, 1999 **Docket:** 12451
For: CRAWLER TRACK LINK MEMBER **Dated:** December 1, 1999

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. §1.56

Sir:

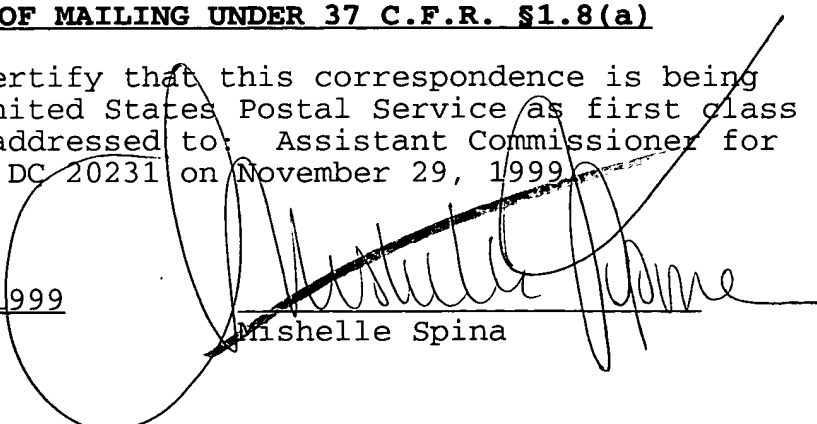
In compliance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.56, 1.97 and 1.98 requiring the Applicants to apprise the United States Patent and Trademark Office of any art of which they are cognizant and which may have a bearing on the prosecution of the present application, Applicants respectfully submit the following:

As set forth in the enclosed Form PTO-1449, Applicants herewith submit copies of German Patent Nos. DE 195

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.8(a)

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231 on November 29, 1999.

Dated: December 1, 1999


Michelle Spina



44 458 A1 and DE 33 35 937 C2, both of which are discussed in the present specification as representative of the prior art.

Furthermore, Applicants submit a copy of the Search Report from the European Patent Office, including the prior art, of which DE 16 05 509B was already described in the present specification.

Concerning the art cited in the European Search Report, German DE 16 05 509B discloses a stamped-out tongue 15, which is the structure to be avoided pursuant to the present invention.

The foregoing is also described in cited WO 96 29 234A, which discloses on page 4, beginning with line 18, a stamped-out tongue 52, also referring to Figures 3a and 3b of the publication. Also on page 5, line 10, with regard to Figures 4a and 4b, there are described stamped-out tongues 52 and 53, and this is also applicable to tongue 52 shown in Figure 5a and 5b.

The sheet metal reinforcing part 52 of Figure 6a through 6b, as well as the sheet metal angle 40, 41, 42, 62 through 66 of Figures 9a through 16b reinforce the contact projection of the traveling cushion. These have nothing in common with the invention inasmuch as the mentioned sheet metal parts are angled from shapes or projections 55, 56 (Figures 13a and 13b) which are interconnected by means of a loop 42.

In contrast therewith, the present invention shows a base or bottom sheet plate 4 which extends over almost the

entire cross-section of the traveling cushion 3 or the mud grippers, and wherein this ground plate 4 possesses the latch 10, and deformation zones 36, 76.

These two features are not described or suggested in the above-mentioned document, and the latter is currently discloses reinforcing parts in the reinforcing of components which are constituted of a plastic material.

None of the foregoing publications are directed to the inventive concept.

Parker et al. EP 00 44 137 A1 also fails to suggest the invention, inasmuch as Figures 5 through 9 show the reinforcing member 30 possessing an attached projection 32. The base member is constituted of nylon, referring to the specification thereof, page 4, last paragraph and page 5, lines 1 through 3.

The ground or base plate or sheet metal 18, which is constituted of steel, fails to provide a resilient securing element and is screwed together with the associated traveling cushion 17 by means of an attached bolt 22. This has nothing in common with the inventive concept.

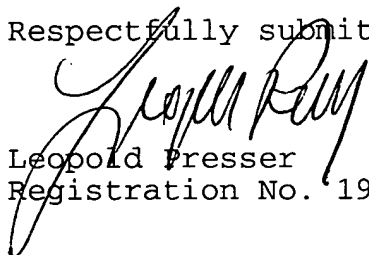
With regard to the prior art referred to in the German Office Action, such as German patents EM 19 32 494 and GM 19 96 393, these are not considered to be relevant, inasmuch as they are directed to a traveling cushion with a stamped-out tongue. Consequently, these publications only relate to the

state of the current technology as described in the present specification.

In view of the foregoing, the early and favorable examination of the application on the merits by the Examiner is earnestly solicited.

Finally, inasmuch as the present Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted prior to the issuance of a first Office Action on the merits, no petition, certification or payment of any fees is required to be submitted by the Applicants.

Respectfully submitted,



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LP/ag
Encls: EPO Search Report
German Office Action
Five (5) Publications